

A Descriptive Analysis of Surigaonon Language

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Abstract:

This study describes and analyzes the Surigaonon language, an ethnic language spoken by people in Surigao del Norte and some people in Surigao del Sur (Surigaonon language, 2006). More particularly, this paper describes in detail the consonant and vowel sounds, stress, intonation pattern and morphophonemic processes of Surigaonon language. Data in this study were gathered from 100 participants of different age groups ranging from 15 to 70 years old. The data were gathered through written and oral communication among native speakers of Surigaonon language. The written texts were gathered through letters, which were collected by the researcher to trace, describe and analyze the morphophonemic processes, such as assimilation, deletion, alternation and metathesis. There were 80 long and short letters collected from the native speakers of Surigaonon language including the letters written by the researcher himself to his family members and friends in Surigao del Norte. On the other hand, verbal communication was gathered by tape-recording the conversations of Surigaonons in Surigao del Norte and the Surigaonon who were working and studying in Manila. The recording was done to identify the participants' consonant and vowel sounds, intonation pattern and word stress. The findings show that Surigaonon language consists of 18 consonants (b,d,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,ng,p,r,s,t,w,y,o,?) with 18 sounds and 3 vowels (a,i,u) with 5 sounds. It has also 25 noun clusters (br, bl, bw, by, dr, dy, dw, gr, gw, kr, kl, kw, mw, my, nw, pr, pl, pw, py, sw, sy, tr, tw, ty, hw) and 4 diphthongs (aw, ay, iw, uy), which are similar to the Cebuano language (Rubrico, 1999). Moreover, there are Surigaonon words that are spelled similarly but they differ in meaning depending on how each syllable is stressed. The findings also show that Surigaonon language follows two intonation patterns like the rising and falling intonations. The rising intonation is common in asking yes or no questions and the falling intonation occurs in ending declarative and imperative statements. Moreover, it is also found out there are morphophonemic changes in the

Surigaonon language. These changes happen through deletion, alternation and metathesis. The findings of the study clearly show that Surigaonon language is a distinct language. Because of this more studies relevant to this research are recommended to provide more information about the Surigaonon language.

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